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ABSTRACT

The author had two major goals in this paper. Firstly, he wanted to talk about what it means to be professional, and in particular, about how the claim to professionalism is established and how it is defended when under attack. Secondly he was concerned about the more elusive condition of paraprofessionalism. It is stated that although the ordinary counselor is able to counsel and present himself as a counselor, the counselor is not qualified merely by virtue of his excellence in counseling. The author follows this discussion by mentioning that there is evidence that the relationship between a degree in counseling and skill in counseling is somewhat shaky. In conclusion a few observations are presented concerning a realistic way out of the paraprofessional dilemma. The first suggestion is that there are more routes than one to realize the goal of skilled and able counselors. The other suggestions are that ability ranking be used within the profession, and that we curb a too zealous and exclusive professionalism. (Author/BW)

# Paraprofessional Issues: Help Giving, Help Taking and Status, Role and Social Network Considerations

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Good morning. I find that the title of our program is a little ambiguous and I think, before I begin my paper, that I would like to set the record straight. Our program is titled Training Counselors for New Employment Service Programs: Formal and Informal Aspects. In fact we are not training counselors but training people to be counselors and on that distinction much depends. I am the director of a counselor training program funded for two years by the United State Department of Labor. The program I direct is located in part at the Center for Continuing Education at the University of Chicago and in part in local Employment Service offices in the Chicago area. The program is called the FAP Counseling Program by the Employment Service. Those of us at the University of Chicago call it, more eloquently perhaps, the Vocational Counseling Institute. In the University Time Schedule it is listed succinctly, if not in fewer words, as Psycho 475, 373, 91, Psych Vocation Counsel, 100 units, taught by staff, location and time to be arranged, identical Psycho 277, the same course for undergraduate credit. The program trains approximately 60 people who are for the most part interviewers in neighborhood Employment Service offices in the Chicago area. There are exceptions. Some of our trainees work in the Chicago WIN program and others work in professional offices of the Employment Service. Some have passed examinations and been promoted to counselor jobs during the year and a half the Institute has been in operation. The greater number of trainees are high school graduates, women, and Black. By most definitions Institute trainees would qualify as paraprofessionals and the Institute program as paraprofessional training. We have no typical trainees, but insofar as Ms. Underwood, a trainee who will be presenting a paper this morning, is a high school graduate, female, and Black she is more like other

trainees in the program than not. With the exception of Ms. Underwood those of us who will present during this session are all Institute staff. You will notice that we are three White males and one White female, all college graduates, who either have been, are, or will become students in graduate level counseling psychology programs. Which is a way of saying that while some of us in the Vocational Counseling Institute are professionals others are not and that brings me very close to the subject of my paper. I have not as yet said much about the design of the Institute and I do not plan to say all there is to say now or at any other time. I and the other speakers will try to fill you in on the details of the training program as we go along. Should you have any questions about this or any other issue please ask them at any time.

I want in this paper to attempt two things. I want to talk a little bit about what it means to be professional and, in particular, about how the claim to professionalism is sestablished and how it is defended when under attack. Secondly I want to talk about the more elusive condition of paraprofessionalism. I say elusive because I for one am much less certain about paraprofessionalism than I am about professionalism. Sometimes I think that I understand it perfectly but at other times I think that I understand it not at all. I do not always feel, for instance, that I know what it is to be a paraprofessional, how the claim is established or how it is defended when under attack. Although I experience uncertainties in thinking about paraprofessionalism I am sure that the uncertainties experienced by paraprofessionals in performing paraprofessional functions exceed my uncertainties by far.

From what I have learned about paraprofessionals I have come to recognize that the uncertainties they experience can be grouped roughly into three classes: uncertainties about status, uncertainties about role, and uncertainties about social network. I assume that the paraprofessionals of which I speak are well trained and that I need not include in my list uncertainties about skill. Uncertainties about skill can be dealt with straightforwardly by means of additional training; the uncertainties I wish to consider in this paper, however, may persist long after training is complete. I would like to talk briefly about each of these three classes of uncertainties in turn. However, I want to begin in each case on more familiar ground with some observations on the status, role, and social networks of counselor professionals as I have come, during the course of my own professionalization, to understand them.

To begin with I want to be clear that I am not talking about counselors and counseling, the Ding-an-sicht, the thing in itself, but about professional counselors and professional counseling, a different order of thing altogether. I do not exactly know how to describe this thing except to say that it is a successful - perhaps the most successful - way for the counselor to present himself and his counseling activities to the world. The distinction between counseling and professionalism in counseling is rather more complex than might be supposed. In a cab on the way downtown the driver clamps his hands on the wheel, curses, and shoots in front of another cab with lightening speed. He brakes and over the blare of the horn from behind shouts that all the troubles in the world are caused by cab drivers who are women. I hazzard

the following observation: "Something about women driving cabs really bothers you." It is a peculiar thing to say by most standards, certainly not an ordinary rejoinder to a not very extraordinary conversational maneuver. What I have said might be classed as the utterance of a professional. It is a thing I have learned to say by choice in order to accomplish a certain effect which I intend to be benign. We will assume that the accomplished effect was the effect intended, that the cab driver so addressed began to talk about his angry feelings and that both of us achieved a very small measure of self-actualization as a result. This is by no means a necessary outcome. It is at least as reasonable to assume that he asked me to get out and walk. But insofar as counseling has taken place and I am the instrument of that counseling I might, in this context, be called a counselor. I am a counselor only by virtue of my counseling skill, however. We would suspect that nothing about my counselor status or role contributed to the effectiveness of my intervention. Now consider a second example. The Vocational Counseling Institute is finished and I am being interviewed for another job. The psychologist who sits across from me tells me that he has reviewed my application and that I am unfortunately not qualified for the job I want. I know immediately what he is talking about and reply: "I haven't taken my Ph.D. yet, but my dissertation is finished, I have passed my orals, and I will graduate in a month's time." Nothing about my training in counseling skills has caused me to answer this way, although my professionalization as a counselor causes me to know what is required and prompts an appropriate reply.

The conclusion is both simple and complex. The ordinary coun-

selor is able to do two things on most occasions when they are required. He is able to counsel and he is able to present himself as a counselor. The one is not the equivalent of the other. The simple conclusion is that no matter how well I counsel I am not qualified to counsel by virtue of the excellence of my counseling merely. Conversely, no demonstration of excellence in counseling is in itself evidence that I am qualified to counsel, no matter how excellently. The complex and seemingly contradictory conclusion is more difficult to state. Something about my qualifications for counseling does indicate something about the level of skill that I have acquired. The fact of my having attained a degree in counseling is related in some way to my disposition to make strange replies to reckless cab drivers on the Outer Drive. Degrees certify counseling skill as well as professional status in counseling. In fact, however, there is evidence that the relationship between a degree in counseling and skill in counseling is somewhat shaky. There is at least reason to suspect Type II error. It is not so much that people who have degrees can't counsel, although this possibility too deserves consideration, as it is that people can counsel who don't have degrees, as well, perhaps, or better than those who do. Then there are the studies which support the conclusion that neither education nor experience have anything to do with success of counseling outcomes. Fortunately, there are also the studies which support the opposite conclusion and, being a counselor educator, I quite naturally prefer those studies. Minimally it seems to me that there is no doubt that people trained in counseling behave differently in certain situations than people who are not so trained. A counselor's interventions are nothing like garden variety parlance and may achieve an effect op-

posite from that intended when used as if they were. I also believe that certain interventions that counselors have learned, for example, the client-centered reflection of feeling, are extremely powerful in achieving certain outcomes when used skillfully in a limited range of contexts. Unfortunately, we are at the present time so far from a complete understanding of those contexts that it is not only difficult to assess counseling outcomes but more difficult still to counsel effectively. Food is good for you, but not any food, not all the time. In the course of our professionalization we have all encountered some of the strains that exist between the system of education and the system of accreditation. As students we were told, or at any rate told one another, that we must complete our degrees even though we had long since completed our educations. Those of us who have completed our degrees, on the other hand, may come to think if we are not careful that our education, too, has been completed.

At this point I would like to set aside counselors and counseling, the thing in itself, and talk for awhile on the subject of professional counselors and professional counseling. I feel that I am able to present myself as a counselor and my activities as counseling by virtue of a professional status, a professional role, and a social network of professionals to which I belong. I am less interested in establishing the exact rank of my status as a professional psychologist than I am in pointing out that I have one. It is a fact that can easily be overlooked. When things go well I tend to disregard status and attribute my successes entirely to my high level of knowledge and skill. When things go badly I may turn to status for consolation. However,

any close examination of status, for a professional, is as apt to be dispiriting as not. While it is true that no matter how low a professional's status there is always a status lower, it is equally true that no matter how high there is always one higher. It is perhaps for this reason that status is not critical in matters of self-esteem. Status cannot be relied on; it is apt not to be there when needed most. Attribution of status, however, is another matter entirely. Whether you think of professional status as achieved or ascribed you must conceed that it is attributed by virtue of professional presentation rather than by virtue of exercise of professional skill. It is, for example, as hard to argue fees with the physician who kills as with the physician who cures. Status appears to be attributed with surprising consistency. Year after year studies of occupational status demonstrate that occupations are ranked the same way as they were the year before. There is, in fact, a monotonous regularity about these rankings which suggests that it is both unreasonably hard to loose a good reputation and unreasonably hard to acquire a bad one. The status of psychologists is not clear in all contexts, but if psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and vocational counselors were ranked by every person in this room I would expect a high level of agreement as to the form that rank would take. My professional status operates, as does all status, to influence my sense of self largely because it influences your sense of me. To say that I am perceived as possessing a certain status is to say something about my level of self esteem but a great deal more about my impact on those who so perceive me and their impact on me. Perceived professional status, in short, is a measure of social influence. Professionals in-

fluence and are influenced in part by means of the status they are accorded. High status counseling professionals influence others, in particular their clients, to a far greater extent than they are themselves influenced and to a far greater extent than do counseling professionals of lower status.

I suspect that the counselor's role, however loosely defined, is better established at present than the counselor's status. I feel this strongly everytime somebody says to me, "You're a psychologist, do something!" The facts of the matter seem to be that people know when it is that a counselor is needed and that counselors, when needed, know what it is they are supposed to do. I will have more to say about role when I discuss paraprofessional training; for the moment I want only to call your attention to the existence of the professional counseling role and to suggest that it is an important aspect of the counseling function.

I want now to say a few words about the importance of social networks to counselors and counseling. Because I think that much of what counselors do is questionable I also think that it is the better counselors who question what they do. For a variety of reasons this questioning of professional activity is best accomplished in a particular kind of social context, minimally in the presence of a particular kind of social other, and it is by means of membership in a social network of professionals that access to such a context is assured. The American Personnel and Guidance Association is an example close at hand. For better or for worse the kind of feedback I need to practice psychotherapy can only be given to me by someone who understands what

it is I do, perhaps, indeed, only by someone trained in the same school of psychotherapy or even in the same style of feedback. I really would not be much interested in playing one of my therapy tapes to an analyst, for example, and I am far more comfortable with non-directive feedback than with other kinds. Persons who are capable of giving such feedback, however, are rare birds. I know some because I trained with them and I will know others because, as part of my professionalization, I learned where to look for them and how to get them to respond to me. And there is another important connection between my professionalization and my network of professional associates. It is that as a part of my professionalization I learned to need a social network; I am not sure that I would have thought I needed such a thing had I not been so taught. I think that this kind of need for networks and use of networks is found only among professionals. Professionals hang together and talk to one another about their work. Blue and white collar workers, although they may hang together and talk, do not customarily talk about their work. Work, indeed, seems to be a thing they seldom talk about; at least, I suspect that, for the average secretary, talking about work means talking about activities that occur at the place of work but which are unrelated to the work context. At any rate, before I was professionalized I did not have a need for a professional network and now I find that such a network is a very necessary aspect of my professional life. What is this addiction among professionals for talking to one another about their work? I can answer at least for myself. Part of the answer refers back to the discussion of status and role. It is among my peers that my status is confirmed and, in keeping track of what my peers are doing,

I am keeping track of changing definitions of my professional role. My network functions as a professional reference group, in short. But more is involved. Learning occurs. I give and receive support and criticism. And something else. In my network interactions something very like the therapy I do is done with me. In talking out my concerns and difficulties, in articulating my confusion, in getting in touch with the feelings that are generated as I perform my counselor's function, I think more clearly and feel better, two successful outcomes which I am trained to recognize in the counseling I do with others. I feel that counselors need more of this therapeutic interaction with peers than other professionals, lawyers, for instance, or physicians. We are more apt to be riled ourselves by the work we do, more required to use our own process in facilitating the process es of others. I heard recently of a clinic in the San Francisco area where each therapist receives an hour of therapy for every hour he gives. It seems to me an equitable arrangement and I, for one, would like to work there.

As I write this I begin to think that the professional counselor has it pretty good or, outside the San Francisco area at least, that the professional counselor would like to have it good and can make a strong claim for having it the way he likes. What, then, of the paraprofessional counselor? It's sometimes helpful to think of paraprofessionals as professionals without status, role, or reference network. This is the case when both paraprofessional and professional counselor are good, that is, when each counsels skillfully, when each knows what he is doing and does what he knows how to do. The good paraprofessional has it far less good than the good professional however; it may be difficult

or impossible for him to do what he knows how to do, he may come in time to feel incompetent or otherwise unqualified to do what he knows how to do, and he may only be able to do what he knows how to do in an isolation so complete that he stops doing it in order to rejoin the human race. There is a sense in which the bad paraprofessional has it better than the bad professional; he is easier to detect and may be easier to suppress than the professional who can hide his incompetence behind a professional screen. I want to discuss what I have come to think of as the paraprofessional dilemma under the three headings of status, role, and social network. Under each of these headings I would like to say a little bit about the paraprofessional problem as I see it and about how we in the Institute have tried to work with the problem during the course of paraprofessional training . I will in all cases be talking about Vocational Counseling Institute trainees and training. I do not really intend that my remarks apply only to Institute trainees, however. I have a strong enough belief in perceptual constancies to think that what I have observed is true to greater or lesser extent for any paraprofessionals in any bureaucratic setting. On the other hand I don't want to suggest to you that I have observed other paraprofessionals in other settings because I have not.

Paraprofessionals, whose status is low, are trained by the Institute to do something which closely resembles the work of professional counselors, whose status, however fluctuating, is relatively high. The paraprofessional's job description, as a result of training, does not change. The consequence is a sense of status incongruity all the way around. Trainees may come slowly to realize that distributive

justice somehow does not apply. They may feel that they are doing or that they are able to do a counselor's work while being denied the rewards or recognition usually associated with that function. Managers and supervisors find it nearly impossible to sympathize with this point of view. A manager sees a trainee go off to the University, leaving his desk and never completed office work behind, for twelve weeks a week at a time over a period of two years and return to his office after each absence looking very much as he did when he went away. The manager does not see training in progress. His job precludes his training with his staff. Nor does he necessarily see a trainee promoted when training is complete. Finally, unless he is willing to make some effort to do so, he does not see the trainee practice his newly acquired skills and abilities. How is this possible when the trainee returns to the same job that he left, a job that he is most often expected to perform in exactly the same way. The results are that managers may well feel that nothing has happened during training and that a returned trainee who wants to utilize new skills meets with something of the same reception that would be given an employee who has no training and no new skills to utilize. As an aside I would like to mention my belief that managers and supervisors might benefit from training in counseling skills or, if training opportunities do not exist, that the use of trained counselors in manager and supervisory positions should be seriously considered. Surely, in a service organization, human interaction skills are appropriately exercised at all administrative levels.

The paraprofessional dilemma might easily be resolved by

giving paraprofessionals the status of professionals when they have successfully completed training in a professional function. I realize, of course, that this solution may not be as popular as it is obvious. Personnel in the Vocational Counseling Institute are trained to create a skilled manpower reserve against the day when the Family Assistance Plan legislation is passed and their services will be needed in a much expanded Employment Service operation. Trainees were told at the time they enrolled that successful completion of the Institute program by no means guaranteed them jobs as counselors. I think that everybody understood this at the start and that nobody is disappointed now because of unrealized expectations. My concern has been rather that the personnel that we were training be used effectively on their jobs, whatever the job assignment or however the job assignment might change. But this, I found, was not an easy goal to accomplish when managers were not convinced that personnel, as a result of training, could perform differently than they had before training was begun. Thus there was created a source of strain and misunderstanding that I am not sure has ever been completely resolved.

My first response was to give managers and administrators every opportunity to make input in planning the Institute program. In this way the Institute staff received some very valuable direction and managers came to feel more invested in the training program than they might have otherwise. Managers did not see trainees any differently, however, and it seemed clear that something more should be done. My second response was to try to demonstrate to managers that training was really taking place. There followed a period in which the

Institute staff, in a series of meetings with managers and supervisors, attempted to explain their ideas about training and the exact nature of the training program they had designed. Curriculum was discussed in detail, managers were invited to take part in activities at the University, consultation groups, which meet regularly in Employment Service offices, were structured so that managers could discuss with trainees and consultants training outcomes and the relevance of training to applicant needs and local office problems. As a result Institute staff and Employment Service managers came to know each other better and like each other more. Managers did not see trainees any differently, however, and it seemed clear that something more should be done. For a long time I was puzzled as to why knowledge of training content and outcomes had so little relation to management's on-going evaulation of trainees. The Institute curriculum was outstanding. Learning was taking place. By performance measures and self report trainees were changing dramatically as a result of Institute participation in ways which could only be understood as productive of more and better counseling skills. Nevertheless management tended to see trainees as unchanged in any relevant dimension. What formerly puzzled me now appears obvious. It is not the way things are done in the world. A professional applying for a job demonstrates credentials, not skills; at least, he must demonstrate credentials before he is given the opportunity of demonstrating skills. In the absence of credentials it is unlikely that managers, who are not professional counselors themselves and who are too busy in their own roles to participate in counselor training, will be convinced that as a result of training their old workers have come into possession

of new and valuable resource skills. You may ask, if seeing is believing, why not ask to see? I reply, in defense of management, that in the absence of credentials the question does not arise. Nor am I convinced, in the case of counseling skills, that believing is wanting what you see. Counseling is a peculiar business as between professional counselor and counselee; it is by no means self-evident that it is a thing to be encouraged. How much more peculiar, then, is counseling between a paraprofessional who cannot claim the status of a professional counselor and a pararecipient who does not have the status of a legitimate counselee.

Much of what I have said with respect to professional status also applies to professional role. However if status, from the point of view of ego, is social influence then role, from the point of view of ego, is psychological efficacy. Efficacy, which has been much studied in social psychology in recent years, is a motivating belief, accompanied by positive feeling tone, that one can change the world or that part of the world, at least, that most impinges. The problem with performing a professional activity without professional status appears to be that you have trouble convincing others that your performance is legitimate. The problem with performing a professional activity without a professional role appears to be that you have trouble convincing yourself. My sense is that Institute trainees, at any rate, are better able to develop self-esteem, that is to value what they had learned to do and themselves for learning to do it, than they are able to develop a sense of professional worth, a sense that when counseling skills are required they are competent to deliver, or to inspire

this sense in those for whom they work. Possession of professional skills without professional status and role works a little like negative identity. If your skills are not recognized you begin to think they are not there; it is easier to believe, in affirmation of the perceptions of others, that you are lacking in skills than to contradict the perceptions of others and believe you posess skills. My colleague, Mr. Knopf, is reading a paper on personal and professional growth. He believes, as most counselor educators believe, that they are one and the same thing. Institute trainees, however, tend to stress personal growth as a training outcome to a much greater extent than they stress professional growth. The reason, I think, is that personal growth is safer ground. It is far easier to assert that you have grown personally - who can dispute it? - than to assert that you have grown professionally. The second assertion, as well as being a claim for self, is a claim for professional recognition.

Learning a professional role is a large part of professional socialization. Learning a professional role is learning the routines and ruses of the profession. For counselors professional role includes attitudes toward issues of confidentiality and ethics. It means not talking about your clients while riding the I.C. It means how much to charge and what to do about unpaid bills. It is a set of prescriptions about social distance which make me slightly uncomfortable when my client and I happen to be dining in the same restaurant and more uncomfortable still when it is my client who takes my order and brings my food. Mastery of role requires professional use of available resources. You know how to talk to the social worker who does intake at the community mental

health center or the psychiatrist who recommends hospitalization for psychosurgery. All of these learnings together add up to knowledge of the expectations associated with a role that is at least as important as knowledge of the role skills themselves. Interestingly enough, however, role expectations are not often explicitly taught. In my four years in graduate school I heard exactly one lecture on the subject of ethical behavior of counselors. I cannot count the times, however, when I was told or when I told others that this or that behavior was inappropriate or unprofessional. In other words, something like role socialization went on parallel to and independent of my formal training in role skills throughout my graduate career. For such socialization to occur, however, it is desirable that a relatively clear set of role expectations be accessible to those responsible for training. In fact, of course, this condition does not really pertain. Nevertheless, role expectations for professionals are a good deal clearer than they are for paraprofessionals. In a very real sense nobody knows yet just what it is that the paraprofessional is supposed to do. If you listen when such matters are up for discussion you will discover that definitions of the paraprofessional's function are couched largely in terms of what he does <u>not</u> do. Paraprofessional counselors, for example, do <u>not</u> do the counselor's job. They do a job which resembles the counselor's, but which is different from the counselor's in that....
There follows a list, more or less detailed and carefully thought out, of all the things permitted the counselor that the paraprofessional may not do. The list, when summed, tell us that paraprofessional counselors are less highly regarded than counselor professionals and very little

else. A set of role expectations which only limits function by means of negative role prescriptions is clearly of little help to someone who wishes to learn to perform a role. The question, 'What is it, then, that I am supposed to do?' remains unanswered. My sense is that the set of positive role prescriptions, those expectations that enjoin rather than forbid paraprofession counseling activities, is not yet fully formulated. In the paraprofessional training offered by the Institute the staff has attempted to be as explicit about role expectations as possible. I feel that an oversight in many paraprofessional training programs is a failure to teach professional role expectations at all. We have tended to assume, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that professional role expectations serve the paraprofessional cause. One result of teaching role expectations is that our trained paraprofessional counselors are able to present themselves, with regard to role, in a professional manner. We have found that when expectations are discovered to be misleading and contradictory it is more because of intrarole conflict - incompatible expectations for the same role in different sources - than because of interrole conflict - incompatible expectations for different roles in the same source. The latter is the conflict of interest or hand in the till type of role conflict which occurs most commonly when expectations are inadequately formulated for the role performances that are required. A typical conflict over the paraprofessional counseling role occurs in the training program when a trainee is praised for making an understanding response at the University and told in his office than an understanding response is wasting the applicant's time. A neat example of

conflict over the paraprofessional counselor's role occured while we were making arrangements for this session. It is an expectation of the counselor's role, other things being equal, that he attend meetings of the American Personnel and Guidance Association. It is not, however, an expectation of the paraprofessional counselor's role and the result is that the two trainees who are participating in this session were not authorized to take professional leave. They are either AWOL or using personal leave in order to be with us this morning. When I questioned this arrangement I was told, significantly in this context, that professional leave could not be authorized for Ms. Harris and Ms. Underwood because they are not counselors, that is, because they are not professionals.

One of the least understood aspects of professionalism is the relationship between professional functioning and membership in a professional support network. I am interested in social networks and I keep up with the literature and I am not aware that any study has been done in which the major focus is the value of professional networks for the professionals who are members. When I think about my own affiliations with such networks, however, I realize that I belong to many and that they serve some very useful functions indeed. To begin with there would not be professional counselors without professional organizations such as the American Personnel and Guidance Association. Professional organizations deal with the system external to the profession; they defend when that system is threatening and they offend when that system is apathetic or ungrateful. I think that I have said enough by now for you to recognize that I find, in the range of human interactions, the counseling interaction to be

unparalleled and even a little strange. So far is it from self-evident that a reflection offeeling does anything in an instrumental sense that I find on occasion that I am sceptical about its worth myself. These moments of doubt are less frequent now, but early in my training nobody could have been more surprised that I when a client responded to some of my better refelcting. Early in my training a network of my peers and trainers, all counselors or counselors to be, served a most important function. This network encouraged me to keep trying a behavior the value of which I questioned myself until such a time as I had a chance to commit myself or not as I or certain significant others of my network decided. Training in counseling skills may not take the first, or the second, or even the nth time around. Membership in a support network helped me to give my training what seems to me in retrospect a fair chance. A great part of the Institute's effort has been given to creating from trainees, University staff, and Employment Service personnel such a support network. My colleague, Ms. Martin, will report on the network function of the consultation group in paraprofessional training. She believes, as I do, that the small group plays an important role in building and maintaining the trainees' identities as counselors. I think we have succeeded in creating effective support networks during the course of the training program. It remains to be seen what will happen to these networks when training is over.

In conclusion I wouldlike to share with you a few observations on what I think may be a way out of the paraprofessional dilemma, a way out which may be closer to realization than suspected.

1. I have no doubt that there are more routes than one to realize the goal of skilled and able counselors. The United States Department of Labor provided the University of Chicago a mignificient opportunity to develop a new route and the Vocational Counseling Institute has successfully trained counselors using content and techniques that are unconventional by many standards. A recent study of psychotherapists recommends that the separate training routes of social work, psychoanalysis, clinical psychology, and psychiatry be merged in a single route and that the four professions be merged in a fifth profession called simply 'psychotherapist.' Professional identity as a psychotherapist would, of course, be a matter of skill acquisition. Certification of skills, however, could be an operation independent of the training facilities in which the skills are acquired. For 'psychotherapist' read 'counselor' and the character of the fifth profession is virtually unchanged.

2. If we think of all those engaged in counseling and psychotherapy as members of a single profession we might also consider the possibility of informal ability rankings within that profession. Todays paraprofessional would be tomorrows professional but that does not necessarily mean that todays professional would loose his professional advantage. Put another way, it is possible to recognize and reward real differences in ability and training within a profession; it is not necessary to disbar some practitioners from membership in order to assure the differential professional recognition of those who remain. Given the fact that professional status is an important component of effective practice it seems unrealistic to

expect competent counselors to attempt to practice while handicapped by being deprived of the status of their profession.

3. Standards of professional selection and certification that arbitrarily limit the availability of professional service, no matter how high the quality of the limited service available, are seriously disfunctional and should be repealed or revised at the earliest possible moment. I cannot think of a single profession that is not in serious trouble in this respect and I feel a considerable responsibility to my own profession to curb a too zealous and exclusive professionalism. The services of competent counselors are needed everywhere and the paraprofessional who can deliver these services should not be hampered by professional closed shop or professional disregard. Thank you.